

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8 – 13, and 15 are pending and under consideration in the above-identified application.

In the Office Action, Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8 – 13, and 15 were rejected.

In this Amendment, Claims 1, 5 and 15 are amended. No new matter has been introduced as a result of this amendment.

Accordingly, Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8 – 13, and 15 remain at issue.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claims

Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8-13 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rovner (U.S. Patent No. 3,825,823) in view of Fragola et al. ("Fragola") (U.S. 2,389,146) and Yamada et al. ("Yamada") (U.S. Patent No. 6,407,547).

Claim 1 is directed to a magnetic azimuth measurement apparatus. The magnetic azimuth measurement apparatus comprises a magnetic detection unit, a sampling unit, a condition determining unit, a condition determining unit, and an azimuth information output unit.

Amended Claim 1 recites that the three or more magnetic detection devices disposed in a wheel-spoke arrangement with their cores positioned to point along their respective axes from a common point. This amendment finds support on page 22, lines 24 – 29 of the Specification and Figure 19.

The Examiner states that Fragola does teach a segmented flux valve, with each segment comprising a core, an exciting coil and a detection coil oriented in a radial pattern. Fragola teaches that these segments form a polygon, having as many sides as magnetic detection units. Thus, in Fragola the cores of the magnetic detection units are disposed along the periphery of the formed polygon. Consequently, only two cores of these magnetic detection units are positioned to point along their respective axes from a common point, which is also positioned on the periphery of the polygon rather than three or more magnetic detection devices disposed in a wheel-spoke arrangement with their cores positioned to point along their respective axes from a common point.

Hence, Applicants submit that none of the cited references, Rovner, Fragola and Yamada, teach or suggest that three or more magnetic detection devices disposed in a wheel-spoke arrangement with their cores positioned to point along their respective axes from a common point.

Accordingly, Claim 1 is patentable over Rovner, Fragola and Yamada et al., taken singly or in combination with each other, as are dependent Claims 3, 5, 6, and 8 – 13 for at least the same reasons.

Independent Claim 15 has been amended to recite the same distinguishing feature as that of Claim 1. Thus, Claim 15 is also patentable over Rovner, Fragola and Yamada et al., taken singly or in combination with each other.

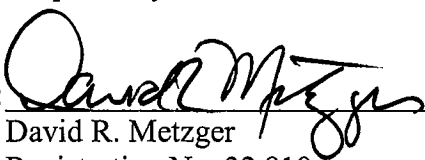
Applicants respectfully request that the claim rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8 – 13, and 15 are clearly allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect.

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Respectfully submitted,

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